



Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan

Issues Summaries

Measure A

Special Election
February 23, 2016

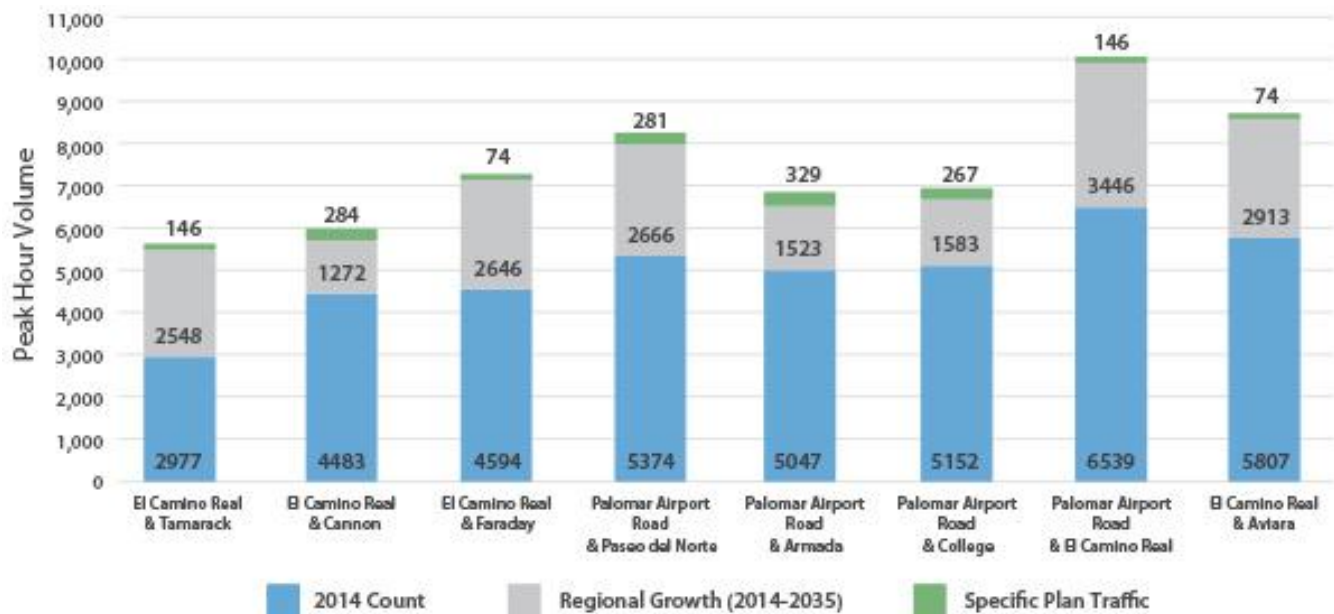
This informational brochure was produced by the City of Carlsbad to help voters understand the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan, which will appear as Measure A on a Feb. 23, 2016, special election ballot. This guide is not intended to expressly advocate either in favor of or against Measure A, rather to provide factual information about its potential effect on Carlsbad land use policies.



Traffic Analysis

The plan's traffic impact analysis studied 31 roadway segments and 34 intersections under three scenarios: 1) existing conditions, 2) year 2019 (opening year) and 3) year 2035 (long range).

- All 31 roadway segments in the study area with significant traffic from the specific plan are forecasted to meet the Growth Management Program standards in all three scenarios.
- All intersections studied currently meet the Growth Management Program standard.
- With the inclusion of the plan's Environmental Protection Features (see section below), all intersections impacted by the plan are forecasted to meet Growth Management Program standards in the year 2019.
- Eight intersections impacted by the plan are forecasted to fall short of the Growth Management Program standard in 2035. These eight intersections are expected to fall short of the Growth Management Program standard even if the plan is not implemented. The plan's Environmental Protection Features are designed to reduce signal delay to a level that is better than forecasted if the plan were not approved.



Environmental Protection Features Included in the Plan

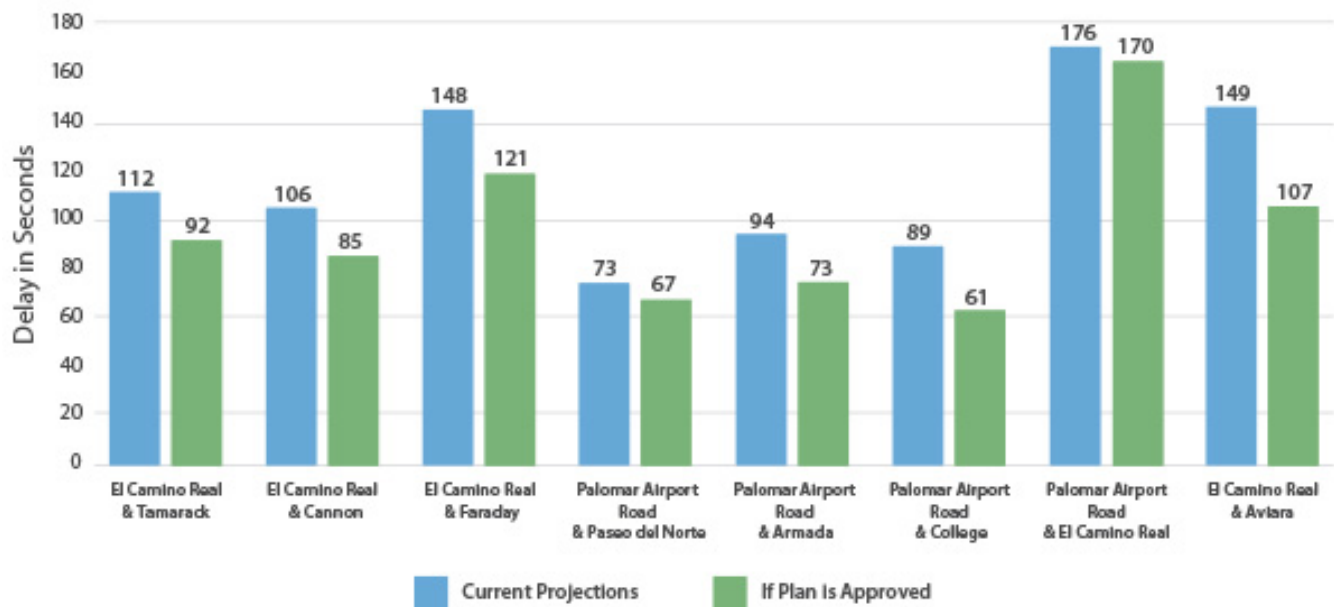
The plan's Environmental Protection Features are intended to improve traffic to meet Growth Management Program standards. However, as the new General Plan Mobility Element notes, Carlsbad cannot continue to use the same approaches to managing traffic as in the past.

- Because roads can only be widened so much, the city will be using traffic signal technology and

other strategies to alleviate traffic congestion.

- The plan provides \$140,000 in funding toward an adaptive signal program that is expected to reduce delay at a minimum of seven signalized intersections once it is implemented.
- Implementation of the plan’s Environmental Protection Features will reduce the amount of signal delays resulting from the plan.
- Carlsbad will not experience any additional congestion as a result of the plan, and in all cases congestion will be reduced as a result of the proposed Environmental Protection Features.

Red Light Wait Times With and Without Measure A



Regional Traffic Demand

- The main reason the Growth Management Program standards will be exceeded in 2035 is because of regional traffic growth not associated with the plan. Much of this traffic increase is associated with development located outside of Carlsbad.
- The plan adds a very small amount of traffic trips to the forecasted regional traffic growth in Carlsbad.

Cumulative Traffic Analysis

- The plan increases traffic a small percentage at each of the eight impacted intersections, and the Environmental Protection Features reduce delay (improve traffic flow) by a larger percentage.
- The plan will fund and fully implement improvements at four intersections where improvements are not currently planned for in the city’s Capital Improvements Program.

Developer-Paid Traffic Fees

The developer will be required to pay more than \$10 million for improvements to local roads and traffic signals.

- District 3 Bridge & Thoroughfare Fee: est. \$5.8 million
- Citywide Traffic Impact Fee: est. \$3.6 million
- Environmental Protection Features not included in the city’s Capital Improvements Program:
 - El Camino Real/Tamarack (plan’s fair share contribution is 3%, will front cost of improvements at \$100,000)
 - El Camino Real/Faraday (1%, will front cost of improvements at \$50,000)
 - Palomar Airport Road/Paseo del Norte (4%, will front cost of improvements at \$75,000)
 - Palomar Airport Road/Armada (5%, will front cost of improvements at \$50,000)



Growth Management Program

Carlsbad's Growth Management Program has guided growth and development since 1986 when it was approved by voters. It ensures Carlsbad maintains an excellent quality of life with enough parks, libraries, roads, open space and important city infrastructure and services as the city grows.

As part of the 9212 Report, the Aqua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan was analyzed against each of the 11 performance standards of the city's Growth Management Plan. The analysis found the Aqua Hedionda Plan complied with or exceeded 10 of the 11 performance standards.

- Since 1995, when the "Zone 13 Local Facilities Management Plan" was adopted, the city has planned for, sized and established financing plans for Growth Management Program facilities on site of the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan.
- The plan site has been planned or designated for 48 acres of visitor-serving commercial since at least 1982 (with Agua Hedionda Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan adoption) and 155 acres of open space since 2006 with voter approval of Prop D.
- The Zone 13 Local Facilities Management Plan designated and planned for 463,600 square feet of visitor-serving commercial use on the 48-acre plan site and sized 11 Growth Management Program facilities based on that square footage projection.
- The plan calls for up to 585,000 square feet of visitor-serving commercial uses on the 48 acre plan site, an increase of 122,000 square feet over what was analyzed in the 1995 Zone 14 Local Facilities Master Plan adoption.

Staff Analysis

- The plan complies with, exceeds or will not impact 10 out of 11 Growth Management Program facility performance standard areas.
 - **Circulation Facilities:** Does not meet standard, but will result in better traffic circulation than if no project were built (see "Traffic" section for details).
 - **Open Space:** Exceeds Open Space performance standard by between 143.1 and 159 acres (see "Open Space" Issues Summary for details).
 - **City Administration:** No impact, plan does not add population.
 - **Libraries:** No impact, plan does not add population.
 - **Wastewater Treatment Capacity:** Meets the Growth Management Program standard that the sewer plant have adequate capacity for at least a five year period, with a projected excess of .26 million gallons per day of sewer capacity at build out. The increase of 9,900 gallons per day of sewer flow that is anticipated from the plan can be accommodated under the existing capacity rights held by the city.
 - **Park Facilities:** No impact, plan does not add population, but plan will pay a Zone 13 park fee of \$0.40 per square foot of non-residential development.
 - **Drainage Facilities:** No impact, "drainage facilities must be provided as required concurrent with development." All Zone 13 plan required regional drainage facilities have already been

constructed, and the plan will construct all drainage facilities necessary to serve the plan area.

- **Fire:** No impact, Growth Management Program standard is dwelling unit based, however, plan area is within five minute response time standard of Fire Station #4, Station #3, as relocated, and Station #1.
- **Schools:** No impact, plan proposes no dwelling units, thus no school enrollment increase.
- **Sewer Collection System:** Adequate capacity, with Sewer System Analysis prepared for plan identifying adequate downstream capacity in South Agua Hedionda Interceptor to accommodate increase (increase represents less than 0.5% of the average flow capacity of the SAH Interceptor).
- **Water Distribution Systems:** Adequate capacity. Standard is "line capacity to meet demand as determined by water district, and a minimum of 10-day average storage capacity must be provided." Carlsbad Municipal Water District is water provider to plan area. Plan proposed results in a 9,802 gpd or 11 acre feet per year increase over water demand for existing agricultural fields. Water Systems Analysis prepared for plan determined that adequate water facilities exist in Cannon Road to accommodate additional demand of plan, and plan will continue to be in compliance with water distribution Growth Management Program standard; Growth Management Program storage standard will not be impacted and will continue to be met.



Open Space

The Growth Management Program standard for Open Space requires that "15 percent of the total land area in the Local Facilities Master Plan Zone, exclusive of environmentally constrained non-developable land, must be set aside for permanent open space and must be available concurrent with development."

- Today, Zone 13 meets this Open Space standard.
- The FY 13-14 GM Monitoring Report indicates that Zone 13 provides 143.1 acres of Growth Management Program qualifying open space in excess of the required Growth Management Program amount of open space (79.7 acres required; 222.8 acres provided; excess of 143.1 acres).

Plan Adds Open Space, Accessible to the Public

- The Plan adds 15.9 acres of Agricultural Support Open Space to area, increasing the amount of excess Growth Management Program qualifying open space to 159 acres.
- Prop D preserved 155.1 acres of the plan area as permanent open space, however:
 - Those lands are privately held.
 - No public access to these lands.
 - Habitat areas, while primarily contained in an open space easement, are not being biologically maintained consistent with Carlsbad HMP standards.
 - Continuation of agricultural uses on the land is not financially guaranteed in perpetuity.
- The plan provides for a total of 176.7 acres of Open Space (155.1 acres of Prop D + 15.9 acres of Ag Support Open Space + 5.7 acres of land under the SDG&E power lines = 176.7 acres).

Plan Protects HMP Open Space

- The 176.7 acres of open space is set aside as either HMP habitat land (75.8 acres), exclusive agricultural land (45.6 acres), agricultural support land (15.9 acres) or passive open space land (39.4 acres).
- The plan will permanently place the HMP habitat land in a conservation easement and financially provide for the management of the habitat to HMP standards in perpetuity.

Passive Open Space

- The plan provides that the 39.4 acres of passive open space lands will be permanently placed in an open space easement that provides for public access in perpetuity.
- The passive open space lands will be improved with trails, viewing areas, picnic areas and an outdoor education area, with all improvements provided by the plan and all maintenance costs to be covered by the plan in perpetuity.

Agricultural Open Space

- The plan provides that the agriculture support (15.9 acres) and the exclusive agriculture lands (45.6 acres) will be permanently placed in an agricultural easement, and farming on these lands will be financially guaranteed in perpetuity.

Value

- The overall value of the open space improvements and maintenance is between \$10 million and \$16.5 million.



Proposition D

In 2006, Carlsbad voters approved Proposition D, which designated 307 acres of land as permanent open space. The boundaries of the Proposition D land are different from the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan. **Proposition D did not include** the 48 acres closest to the freeway, which have been zoned for visitor-serving commercial development since 1982.



Current Land Use (If Measure A Does Not Pass)



Proposed Land Use (If Measure A Passes)



Under Measure A ...

26.7 acres could be developed for visitor-serving commercial uses

61.6 acres of coastal agriculture would be guaranteed to continue indefinitely

Open space guaranteed to be accessible to the public indefinitely

No residential development allowed

Habitat areas would be managed according to scientific standards, at no expense to taxpayers

Allowed uses in the "open space" area more limited (trails, agriculture, etc.)

Cannot be changed or repealed without a public vote for 15 years. After that, it may be amended or repealed by the City Council or a public vote.



Under Proposition D ...

48.3 acres could be developed for visitor-serving commercial uses (these 48 acres were NOT part of Prop D)

Coastal agriculture is encouraged to continue as long as "economically viable for the landowner"

Public access to open space currently prohibited by property owner

No residential development allowed

No management of habitat areas required and no funding provided

Allowed uses in the "open space" area more broad (could include museums, recreation centers, ballfields, etc.)

Can only be amended or repealed by a public vote

Open Space Provisions

- Although Prop D designated much of the property as open space, there are no requirements in Prop D to make that open space accessible to the public. It is currently privately owned, and trespassing is not allowed.
- Prop D did not specify a funding source or mechanism to improve or maintain the open space.
- Prop D did not require or provide a funding mechanism for the biological management of natural habitat on the site.
- Under the plan, much of the land designated as open space under Prop D, plus an additional 21.6 acres for a total of 176.7 acres of open space, would become accessible to the public through trails, picnic and scenic view areas, agriculture, farm to table dining and an outdoor classroom and amphitheater. The only open space that would not be directly accessible to the public is the sensitive habitat areas.
- The plan makes provisions to permanently protect and maintain the 176.7 acres for open space, agriculture and habitat.
- The open space would be enhanced and maintained in perpetuity through a conservancy funded by the visitor-serving commercial development.
- The sensitive habitat areas will be restored and biologically managed to the city's Habitat Management Plan standards in perpetuity.

Strawberry Fields

- Prop D called for the strawberry fields to continue on the site as long as they were financially viable for the landowner.
- Due to changes in the labor market, regulations and water supply, the strawberry farming operation on the site has steadily decreased in recent years, from over 100 acres to approximately 30 acres today.
- The plan would financially guarantee the continuation of coastal agriculture on 61.5 acres in perpetuity.



Environmental Analysis

Voter-sponsored initiatives are not required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act; however, a comprehensive (more than 4,000 pages) Environmental Analysis has been voluntarily prepared by the proponent, which provides information about potential environmental impacts of the plan and a commitment to “Environmental Protection Features.”

- Because these features are a component of the initiative, the proponent would be bound to these Environmental Protection Features during development and operation of the plan.

Overall Findings

- Staff evaluated the information contained in the Environmental Analysis and concurs that the analysis and proposed Environmental Protection Features are in substantial conformance with the typical city policies and practices for addressing various environmental issue areas that would occur through a typical CEQA review process.
 - There are only a few instances where more detail or clarification regarding potential impacts or measures to reduce impacts could have been provided.
 - These clarifications can be addressed either as the plan advances through the California Coastal Commission review and approval process or as part of staff ministerial permit review and plan check approvals.
- No environmental impacts resulting from the plan were found to be excessive or extraordinary as compared to many similar development projects that have been approved and constructed within the city in recent years.

Air Quality

- The City of Carlsbad is located in a “non-attainment air basin” for several precursor emissions, meaning the area has been designated by the state and/or federal government as not meeting regulatory standards for one or more pollutants.
- Because of this designation, thresholds for acceptable levels of emissions for new projects are very low.
- The plan, which proposes 585,000 square feet of commercial land uses, exceeds the 2009 San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy development projection of 463,600 square feet of recreational commercial land uses on the plan site.
- Although the plan is consistent with the city’s existing and proposed Land Use Plans and SANDAG’s 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy, the plan is not consistent with the 2009 Regional Air Quality Standards for San Diego.
- The Environmental Analysis conclusion regarding air quality is consistent with most other large projects that have been evaluated and approved by the city over the years through the typical CEQA review process.

Soil

- The Environmental Analysis states that soils within the visitor-serving commercial portion of the plan are suitable for commercial/industrial uses, and hazardous materials would not be released.
- The Environmental Analysis also concludes that the “exclusive agriculture open space” portion of the plan would not be developed with commercial or industrial uses, and hazardous materials would not be released. Soil sampling assessments and soil management procedures are required.
- The Environmental Analysis does not discuss the potential release of hazardous materials in the other open space areas.
 - Based on a review of the information provided, the Habitat Management Plan open space portion of the plan site has likely remained untouched by agricultural activities and is not likely to contain soil contaminants that would result in the release of hazardous materials.
 - The “passive open space” portion of the plan is within areas of previous agricultural activity. Based on the soil sampling results from 2004, portions of this area contain elevated levels of organochloride pesticides in the soil. This area calls for the development of hiking and biking trails, picnic areas and other passive recreational activities.
 - Adherence to the construction specifications and applicable federal, state and local regulations during ministerial/permit review and plan check approvals would ensure that there is not a significant hazard to the public or the environment from the pesticides.
 - The cost of mitigating the hazard, including removal of soil, if necessary, would be the responsibility of the landowner/developer.

Water Supply

- Plan potable water demand would be less than existing and “no project” agricultural water demands.
- Projections for potable water demand are generally consistent with current Carlsbad Municipal Water District standards; however, the proposed potable water demand is slightly higher than projections in the CMWD 2012 Water Master Plan, so supply availability would need confirmation at plan check based on a hydraulic analysis.
 - This can be done in conjunction with the “environmental protection feature” included in the plan, which provides that building permits shall not be issued unless adequate water facilities are available at the time of permit issuance and will continue to be available until time of occupancy.
- Recycled water demand projections of 2,230 gallons per day are higher than those in the 2012 CMWD Recycled Water Master Plan category for industrial properties but recycled water is available to support the plan.



Agriculture

Plan designates 61.5 acres as agriculture: 45.6 as exclusive agriculture, 15.9 as support agriculture.

- The plan will permanently conserve, restore, enhance and provide for its continuation in perpetuity.
- An agricultural conservation easement will be placed on these agricultural lands, and revenue from the visitor-serving commercial uses will financially maintain the agricultural lands in perpetuity; these requirements must be in place prior to the opening of any visitor-serving commercial uses.
- Prop D only "encouraged the continuation of agriculture as long as it was economically viable for the landowner;" no financial guarantee, no "in perpetuity."
- Carlsbad Strawberry Company has historically farmed as much as 110 acres, but over the last 10 years it is down to farming only about 30 acres due to water costs, foreign competition, pesticide laws and labor shortages.



Economic & Fiscal

The plan will yield at least \$2,575,000 net annual increase in ongoing city general fund revenues. General fund revenues pay for things like police, fire service and parks.

- Although this is a conservative estimate that is less than projected by proponents, it is still a very significant positive net increase to the city (net increase includes projected revenue minus expected increase to city costs for services).
- City estimate does not include any moneys estimated for tourism impacts, since there is no accepted methodology for estimating this.
- Any revenue generated from increased tourism resulting from the plan (primarily increased hotel room nights and thus increased TOT to city) will be in addition to the \$2,575,000 per year to city.
- By using a conservative estimate, if the city's numbers are wrong, the city will see an even greater economic benefit.
- Property taxes will automatically go up once the outstanding debt obligations of the former Carlsbad redevelopment areas are paid off.

Employment

- During construction, the Environmental Analysis submitted with the plan, using the proprietary economic impact model IMPLAN, estimates that the plan will generate approximately 4,485 to 4,974 full-time equivalent (FTE) construction related jobs, approximately \$284 to \$315 million in labor income (wages) and approximately \$626 to \$698 million in economic output (spending) in the region through direct, indirect, and induced economic activity.
- From ongoing operations of the plan area after completion and stabilization, the EA estimates that the plan will generate approximately 2,298 to 2,440 FTE jobs, approximately \$102 to \$108 million in labor income and approximately \$392 to \$624 million in economic output annually in the region through direct, indirect and induced economic activity.



Voluntary Public Benefit Measures

The plan meets city standards and obligations applicable to a visitor-serving commercial and open space project of this size, including funding traffic improvements and protecting lagoon water quality. In addition, the plan’s sponsor has voluntarily included a number of public benefits that go beyond those provided by other similarly sized projects recently approved in the city.

Increased Open Space with Public Access

- The plan would change 21.6 of the 48.3 acres currently designated for visitor-serving commercial use to permanent open space, for a total of 176.7 acres of open space (86.9% of the plan site).
- Much of the open space in the plan would be open and accessible to the public. A total of 39.4 acres of passive open space, along with a large portion of the agricultural open space areas in the plan (U-pick stand and fields) would be permanently accessible to the public. Currently it is marked “no trespassing.”
- Revenue from the visitor-serving uses would fund improvements to and maintenance of the public open space, including lookout points, approximately 2.5 to 3 miles of trails, picnic areas overlooking the lagoon and an outdoor educational classroom.
- All habitat areas will be maintained in perpetuity to the strict standards outlined in Carlsbad’s Habitat Management Plan, with funding provided by the plan.
- All the open space would be fully funded and maintained in perpetuity at no cost to taxpayers.

Guaranteed Continuation of Agriculture

- Currently, the strawberry fields may remain at the site as long as they are “financially feasible” for the landowner.
- Due to changes in the labor market, regulations and water supply, the strawberry farming operation on the site has steadily decreased in acreage of the past 10 years.
- The plan would guarantee that the family that has been farming at this site for generations can continue, and the strawberry fields and farming will be finally supported by the visitor-serving commercial land uses in perpetuity.

Thorough Environmental Review

- Although not required, the project sponsor prepared more than 4,000 pages of technical studies and analysis identifying the environmental impacts and committing the sponsor to implement mitigation measures (Environmental Protection Features).
- The level of environmental analysis completed is consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act, often called CEQA.
- City staff and third party experts reviewed the documents, studies and analysis and found it to be sound.

Extensive Public Involvement

- The project sponsor has spent over three and a half years meeting with community members and inviting input on the plan.
- The plan reflects the community’s priorities of maintaining open space, providing public access to open space, preserving the strawberry fields and protecting the lagoon and habitat areas.
- This public outreach and involvement effort goes far beyond what is required and what is typically done, even by our most community-oriented developers.

For More Information

Please visit the City of Carlsbad’s website at www.carlsbadca.gov/voterinfo or call 760-434-2820.

Government Code section 54964 authorizes a local agency to spend funds to provide information to the public about the possible effect of a ballot measure on the activities, operations or policies of the local agency when the informational activities are lawful and the information provided constitutes an accurate, fair and impartial presentation of relevant facts to aid the voters in reaching an informed judgment about the ballot measure. The information in this document has been reviewed for compliance with Government Code section 54964 and applicable case law.